

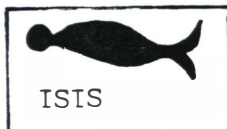
- Flores, Indonesia: According to an AFP report in the Süd-deutsche Zeitung (10 January 1996, p. 10), a white monitor lizard was seen on the island of Flores by locals in the Bajawa district in the north of the island. Experts are uncertain whether this is an exceptional example of a Komodo monitor lizard or a new species.

• Lake Van, Turkey: Andreas Trottmann has send me further information on the lake Van monster. According to a story in the newspaper "Bund" (Berne, Switzerland, 5 January 1996), the private Turkish TC station "Star" screened a film of the monster on the evening of January 3, 1996. The film shows dark shadows moving in the water of the lake. The phenomena are 20 to 25 m in length, move quite rapidly and blow "large fountains of water" from time to time. Eyewitnesses describe a black creature similar to a dinosaur with triangular fins on the back. Scientists remain sceptical and assume the phenomena are only small submarine eruptions of volcanoes. Three scientists from the University of Van, after viewing the television images, begged to differ. Professor Cengiz Andic, a limnologists, said: "These pictures prove that some large creature is in the lake".

• Loch Ness: Grunts heard in submarine, Fortean Times 84, p. 8 -- In the extracts from the Gentleman's Magazine by Peter Christie in Fortean Studies 2 (p. 259), we find a 1761 report of "waves without wind" on Loch Ness, caused by earth tremors. This is the second documented incidence (the other was in 1755) and shows that these waves have nothing to do with monsters, as has been claimed by some.

• Bibliography: Giant snakes in Paraguay, Fortean Studies 2, p. 254 -- excellent article on the Skrimsl, the alleged Nessie of Iceland, by Michel Meurger, in Fortean Studies 2, p. 166-176 -- Dutch newspapers have been exaggerating the danger of big catfish in the rivers and lakes of the Netherlands with wild monster stories, see Stuttgarter Zeitung 13. Jan 96, p. 118.

• Monster lakes: The "Welt", 7. February 96, p. 11, had a short article on the world premiere of the new movie Loch Ness in Inverness. More on the movie can be found in Andreas Trottmann's "Loch Ness Newsclipping Service" 4/1995 (Adress: Les Pretresses, 1586 Vallamand VD, Switzerland). // Police with miniature submarines dive into the depths of Lake Mjøsa, Norway's monster lake. They do not search for a sea serpent, but for car wrecks left there by insurance swindlers. (Ludwigs-burger Kreiszeitung, 7. Feb 96, p. 19).



• Puerto Rico: According to ufologist Jorge Martin in various articles (Strange 15, p. 34; Strange 16, p. 35; Magazin 2000 109, p. 41-46), the mummy of an extraterrestrial being has been discovered near Salinas. There are various stories about how it was killed or discovered, and a large number of photos which show it. The thing is one ft small, and has, as most Puerto Rican ETs, "very long arms which end in four fingered webbed hands with long fingernails or claws." Another fish-man as extraterrestrial. The mermaids are coming back!

• I sometimes wonder what would happen if Heuvelmans wrote a book on mermaids. There are certainly as many sightings as we have of sea serpents, and before 1808, when sea serpents were first spotted in British waters, people used to see mermaids in stead. In Fortean Studies are several sightings, all of them interesting: p. 168: merman sighting by Danish biologists 1723, baby mermaid discovered in shark's stomach. p. 250: mermaid in 1610 off Newfoundland, seen by Richard Whit-bourne. p. 256: mermaid exhibited swimming in a Paris aquarium, 1758. p. 262: mermaid seen at Noirmontier (actually Noirmoutier, near Nantes, Brittany). The hand of the unfortunate creature was cut off! There is more physical evidence for mermaids than for sea serpents, and it would be pretty smart when Heuvelmans would show, by means of his "statistical approach", that we have nine types of unidentified mermen, of which several are pinnipeds, others sirenian, some evolved water apes and some perhaps extraterrestrial. What a challenge for cryptozoology!

• "Kremlyovskaya Vodka" had ads in most German magazines showing a bottle of their vodka in front of a young lady. The lady is dressed in a rubber suit ending in fish tails. A zipper runs down her front, from the breasts to the tail fluke. "Wouldn't you just love to open it?" runs the caption. (TV Spiel-film, 9. - 22. December 1995, p. 59)



● Grotte Cosquer, France: I have repeatedly had items on the drawing of a strange creature, resembling a penguin, in this stone-age cave. In Bilk 67, I assumed that the French scientists who identified the beast as penguin had in mind the Great Auk rather than the penguin which only lives in Antarctic waters. Francoise de Sarre confirmed this view: "In French, pingouin refers both to penguin and auk. In scientific nomenclature, pingouins refers to auks, while the penguin is called manchot". So the whole fuzz about "penguins" in a French cave was, as I had assumed from the start, only a translation problem. Archaeologists identify the picture also as a snow chicken, which Francoise de Sarre

believes the picture shows the long-necked sea serpent. He has send me photos of the cave paintings taken at an exhibition at the "Musée Terra Amata" (Nice) - I give a side-reversed line tracing here. This is the first time I see that there are actually two of the beasts depicted in the



cave. While I remain very skeptical about the identification as sea serpents, it is save to say that the identification as great auk or chicken is equally uncertain. What exactly did the stone age people wish to depict here? This is a story which will be with us for some time, I assume.

● Bibliography: Fortean Studies 2, p. 247: sea unicorn, p. 254: unusual shark, p. 263: sea monster near Leith 1762. It had 3 rows of teeth and "5 rows of an astonishing hard and rough skin" on each side of the throat. This is the perfect description of the rows of teeth and gills of a shark. -- Fortean Times 84, p. 8, new sightings of Morgawr. -- In Bilk 67, I mentioned the find of a baby sea serpent in the stomach of a sperm whale in British Columbia. I gave the date as 1993, which - as Francoise de Sarre told me, is wrong. The find was actually made in 1937. I now have LeBlond's und Bousfield's "Cadborosaurus" (Victoria, BC: Horsdal & Schubart 1995) which contains a chapter on the find. I was very surprised that LeBlond identifies it as marine saurian because it looks like a decomposed (or well digested) basking shark. An absolutely identical find from Henry Island 1934 was identified as such, as was the stranding of a "sea serpent" at Provincetown, Mass., in 1939 (declared "unidentified" by Heuvelmans). I have a photo of a sea serpent stranded in New York, 1970, which is identical to the 1937 Naden Harbour, BC, specimen discussed here, which was found to be a basking shark. But I am no zoologist. I wish LeBlond and Bousfield every success with their version of Caddy - in good cryptozoological tradition, they have described it and it has already received a scientific latin name. There must be at least two dozen scientific names and identifications of sea serpents by now. Interestingly enough, LeBlond and Bousfield cannot use any of Heuvelmans' categories, so they've invented a new species of sea serpent.

#### MIXED BAG

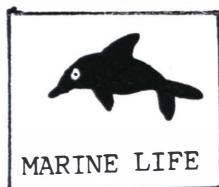
● Nahuel Huapi, Argentina: This is the most famous of all monster lakes in South America. In January 1996, an enormous forest fire destroyed more than 2800 hectares of forest around Bariloche in the Nahuel Huapi National Park. The fire raged for several days before it could be controlled, leaving a landscape like on the moon. Not really monster-related, this item, but I have included it here for completeness' sake (Heilbronner Stimme, 19 Jan 96, p.6; Frankfurter Rundschau 24 Jan 96, p. 30).

● Prayers for rain: In November 1995, the Emir of Oatar prayed for rain, accompanied by several members of his family and several ministers. Khaled Bin Ahmed Al Darhan, the cleric who led the prayer session, said the sins of the Emirat's population shied the rain away. In the previous week, more than 100 000 moslim's had joined King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in his traditional prayer for rain (Rheinfalz 28 Nov 95). In Spain, deluge-like torrents of rain followed processions asking for rain in January (Süddeutsche Zeitung 25 Jan 96).

● A new phylum of animal has been discovered, a tiny creature with the nice little name 'Symbion pandora'. Scientists found it while looking into a lobster's mouth. It is only 1/3 mm in length and can only be seen under a microscope. 35 pylae had been known before. (Stuttgarter Zeitung 13 Jan 96, p.51)



● Underwater Lightwheels: Mike Shoemaker's study of the problem of lightwheels seen in the Indian Ocean seems to be the most complete today and is worth the prize of Fortean Studies 2 alone. I'd like to add some reports and details Shoemaker seems to have missed. Firstly, I'd like to disagree with him that Prof. Kalle's study of the problem in the 1960s was "superficial", after all, Kalle for the first time assembled all 80 reports known by then and tried to make sense of them. The second point is Sanderson's allusion to lightwheel reports in ancient Indian literature. Sanderson was probably influenced by early ancient Astronauts writings. I have checked all books dealing with Indian vimanas by the tedious von Däniken fans but only encountered vague references. Yet in W. Raymond Drake's "Gods and Spacemen in the Ancient East" (Sphere: London 1973, American original 1968), on p. 33, we read the following story which Sanderson may have seen as an early lightwheel report: "In the Konarak, India, are found the finest carvings of the Eight Wheels described as a transportation for the sun goddess, Surya, to the sky. The most frequently invoked Gods were the twin Aswins, who drove a ruddy, tawny car, bright as burnished gold, armed with thunderbolts; sometimes they 'floated' over the ocean, keeping out of the water' in a vehicle oddly described as 'tri-columnar, triangular and tri-wheeled, well-constructed' on which they rescued Bhujya from the sea in a ship which flew from space." Also, a very detailed lightwheel report from the London Times (26 June 1936, p.17c) is absent from his list. It reports how on May 21, 1936, the ship Kudat was in the middle of a tropical thunderstorm between Singapore and Bangkok. D N F Davidson observed in the strong rain a diffuse white light in the sea, flashing two times a minute. Then the ship drove through "waves of light" which seemed to extend in all directions from the ship. The light was strong enough to illuminate the rain and the ship. The phenomenon lasted for half an hour. German UFO fanatic Gottfried Herberts (Begegnungen mit Außerirdischen. Frankfurt: Fischer 1977, p. 103) reported - without source - a lightwheel with fantastic speed below the Persian Gulf seen by a certain Matthew Megle in 1943, and Antonio Ribera (UFOs and the Sea. Flying Saucer Review, Nov-Dec 1964, p. 8-10) has an undated sighting by the ship Sheila about a light wheel between Assab and Djibouti in the Red Sea.



- Shark attack: A 5m white shark attacked a diver off Chatham Islands, New Zealand. Fortunately, the diver escaped when got hold of a stone and hit the shark in the eye (Stuttgarter Nachrichten, Frankfurter Rundschau, Ludwigsburger Kreiszeitung, all 1 Dec 95) --South of Sydney, Australia, a shark rammed a fishing boat and then circled the raft for nine hours. The observer (14 Jan 96, p. 20) repeatedly calls the shark "dangerous", "man-eater" etc., but the creature never once attacked! This shows how ever "quality papers" can write in stupid clichés. I suppose the only creatures that were killed during this incident were harmless fish. But newspapers need the "monster" image of the shark.
- Whales: 20 dolphins washed ashore at the coast of Yucatan, Mexico (Stuttgarter Zeitung, 7 Dec 95, p. 20) -- Whale ramms a yacht near Sydney, Australia (Frankfurter Rundschau 28 Dec 95, p. 32). A pattern here - see the shark item above? -- 4 dead fin whales stranded in the Mediterranean Sea (Welt 2 Jan 96, p. 10) -- a school of whales stranded several times at the east coast of Australia. They were towed back into the sea, but returned to land each time. (Stuttgarter Zeitung 13 Jan 96, p. 24) --On January 31, 96, a sperm whale stranded on a beach of the German island Norderney. It died and had to be disposed off (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung 3. Feb 96, p. 7; Stuttgarter Nachrichten 6. Feb 96, p. 8; Bietigheimer Zeitung 6. Feb 96, p. 7). -- the Yangtse dolphin is threatened by extinction. Only 100 individuals still exist. (Süddeutsche Zeitung 7. Feb 96, p.12) -- a large fin whale stranded at Oregon Inlet, North Carolina, in February (Bietigheimer Zeitung, 9 February 1996, p. 6)

This ends another Bilk. A rather longer issue this time, but there was so much news. Next issue I will probably carry a short review of the Cadborosaurus book, which is fairly small and looks more like an enlarged booklet. Please remember that news and views are always welcome.